

NEWS RELEASE

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UTAH COAL OPERATOR RECOGNIZED
FOR OUTSTANDING RECLAMATION

The Department of Interior's Office of Surface Mining presented Utah's Castle Gate Mine with their "Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation" award for 2003. Deputy Secretary of the Interior Steven Griles presented the award earlier this month at an awards banquet in Washington, D.C. The award recognizes outstanding reclamation practices and achievements by coal mine operators. Reclamation sites in six other states and two Indian reservations were also recognized.

In addition to the reclamation award, Castle Gate's Environmental Engineer Johnny Pappas was singled out for the 2003 "Best of the Best" award. The Office of Surface Mining selects one individual from the national award winners and recognizes that person as most responsible for outstanding accomplishments at the selected site.

"Reclamation is one of the primary responsibilities of the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining," explains Division Director Lowell Braxton. "We have worked closely with Castle Gate Holding Company and Johnny Pappas and are extremely pleased to see all our efforts have been recognized.

"The division normally reviews and approves the reclamation plan and conducts site inspections," said Braxton. "What made this reclamation so good was the collaborative effort of the division, the operator and the contractor working as a team to seek the best solution."

The Castle Gate Mine, a subsidiary of RAG American Coal, Inc., is located in a steep, mountainous canyon near Price, Utah, where underground coal mining started in the 1880s. Prior to reclamation the site contained buildings, truck loading facilities and large quantities of coal refuse.

Following the valuable contribution of jobs and energy, coal mined land after reclamation is capable of sustaining multiple uses. The entire area has now been covered with soil and native grasses, forbs, and shrubs and a picturesque mountain canyon is all that remains of this former underground coal mine.

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